

**October 24, 2005**

A lot of activities continue on the WA-Trans Project. Here is a summary of what I have been working on (with some assistance!).

Mark Hotz left the project in mid-May. He decided he needed to be in Canada. So I immediately started looking for his replacement. I hired Michael Leierer. Michael and I worked together previously and he has significant experience in software development. He will need to learn more about GIS (sound familiar?), but he will take a lead role in the Transportation Pooled Fund (TPF) effort, which is largely a software development effort so his skills will be well applied there. Michael started out by redesigning our website. I think it is much improved. Please check it out and tell us what you think! Michael's e-mail is [LeiereM@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:LeiereM@wsdot.wa.gov). His phone number is 360.709.5511.

The Puget Sound Pilot is moving along well. We have agreement points settled and documented between King and Pierce Counties. Chuck will report on that process at the meeting.

Additionally we have completed the Translator RFP. We received two proposals. One was very intriguing, somewhat expensive and really would be more useful for integration than translation. We can look at them again during the integration effort. The other had included the ESRI Data Interoperability Extension (DIE) (based on FME) and used ESRI Model Builder to develop a translation process. It didn't meet all the business needs and the proposal was very incomplete. However, the software met many of the requirements. It will still require a very good user interface to work, but that is part of the other pilot and will be tackled later.

What was ultimately decided on was to purchase the DIE and install it and set up a Citrix connection to it at WSDOT. We will be hiring a technical writer and contracting with ESRI to provide "knowledge transfer". Chuck and someone from King County will work with ESRI to develop a process for getting their data translated. The tech writer will document the process and develop some good user help for it using ROBOHELP. This will be tested by PSRC who will have to perform the integration. They also have to translate the data into the format needed by The National Map. ESRI has presented us with a proposal for their services that we are working to pare down to the essentials. The tech writer should be hired by the end of the month.

Work continues to finish off the data model and standards. We have finally had a chance to get input on Indian Reservation Roads. We are in the process of making sure we are able to indicate them in the data model. Additionally we have finalized the information about rail data. We are still concerned about light rail and need to speak with someone to finalize ferries. We are determining required fields.

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We are also finalizing architecture. It seems likely that the working storage WA-Trans will be a geo-database and the WA-Trans database that holds "processed" data will be a standard SQL database. I will be meeting with the WSDOT Office of Information Technology to get the pilot architecture established and provide the pilot participants with access as needed.

I am going to use some of the money left to hire (or pay for the use of) a GIS analyst to work on integrating WSDOT data into the Puget Sound Pilot data. It will not interfere with what is already planned, as the timing is critical, but we need to figure out how to do this.

We have renamed the Oregon Washington Pilot the Transportation Pooled Fund Pilot (TPF) so that the other states involved don't feel that they are excluded. We are now partnering with Ohio, Oregon, Tennessee, and Nebraska. Mississippi expressed significant interest, but after Hurricane Katrina they are obviously otherwise occupied! We still hope they can get involved later. Michael is working on a charter document and we are arranging to begin meeting with the other states after the GIS-T conference in Columbus, Ohio this spring. We will be focusing on translators and how the DIE compares with the FUSION and FME. If we can develop common interfaces between these translators then the software we develop will work for most of the state DOTs involved.

You were all invited to participate in a return on investment (ROI) study. It will include training in developing business case for GIS. It will also lead to an evaluation of the value of WA-Trans for transportation planning for multiple agencies and levels of government. We considered emergency management but decided that it would be high risk because of the limited involvement of the Emergency Management Division. The study is funded by FGDC and will be run by GITA.

On a final note, the Traffic Safety Commission and the Traffic Records Committee has prioritized WA-Trans as third on their list of five IT projects that they will be using federal traffic safety funding. The two projects preceding WA-Trans on the priority list are already partially funded.

We will decide when we want the next years meetings to be held at the meeting.